

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Claims 2-3, 5, 7-8, 10, 15, 23-24 and 39-40 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. Claims 1-35 and 38-40 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Smith. Claims 1-7, 12-14, 16, 20, 21-23, 27, 31 and 33-40 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Hoff. Claims 1-2, 4, 6-7, 9-10, 12-22, 26-35 and 38-40 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Nicolai. Claims 1-7, 9-14, 16-24, 26-35 and 38-40 were rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Yang.

The present invention relates to a tent construction and a method of manufacturing such a tent construction comprising a basic tent construction, having one or more panels like a roof, a side wall, etc. According to the invention at least one of the panels of the basic tent construction is completely covered by one or more covering panels. The covering panels moreover are removably connected to the basic panel along at least one edge of the covering panel.

Such a construction has a number of distinct advantages which have been discussed in the specification. One important advantage is that the outer panels may be connected to the inner or basic panel(s) by operable connection means like zippers or VELCRO strips or the like. Thus, an outer panel connected to a basic

panel in such a manner may be easily cleaned or even replaced if so desired.

Also the panels of the basic tent construction may be made of "breathable" cloth, which will prevent condensation of moisture inside the tent. This is a very important feature of the inventive tent construction.

Furthermore, the connection means connecting outer and inner panels may be partially opened in order to ventilate the interspace between an outer and an inner panel. Thereby the inner space of the tent construction will be effectively cooled in hot weather. It would also be possible to pivot a covering panel outwardly along its upper edge in order to uncover a window or a ventilation opening in the inner panel. Further it would be possible to insert insulating material in the space between a basic panel and a covering panel. All these modifications as well as further modifications have been disclosed in the specification.

For the Examiner's information two of the applicant's leaflets have been enclosed (Attachments 1 and 2). Also a copy of an article (Attachment 3) relating to novel features of tent trailers (collapsible caravans) in a Dutch magazine called "Kampeerkampioen" of November 2001 is attached. The underlined part of the article reads:

*Holtkamper's new one: the tent trailer Coccon
with the High Tech Membrane Tent System.*

Briefly: the roof of the Cocoon for two to four persons comprises two layers. The synthetic upper layer may be completely detached by means of zippers and may therefore be cleaned. The lower part is made from an open structure type of cloth, through which air may easily pass. By opening the zippers the roof will ventilate (hot ascending air can flow out). If the zippers remain closed an insulating layer of air will exist between the two parts of the roof.

The two page, single sheet leaflet (Attachment 1) shows in the middle part of the front page a picture of a tent trailer having a roof in accordance with the present invention. The upper (covering) roof panel is shown at some distance above the lower (basic) roof panel in order to ventilate the space between both panels and thereby the inner space of the tent.

Just above the picture a schematic drawing explains how it works. The lower horizontal black line in the drawing represents the inner or basic roof panel, which is made from filter cloth. This may be cotton or another suitable "breathable" cloth. The upper double horizontal line represents the covering roof panel, which is made from polyester with two sided acryl clothing.

The roof is shown in the situation wherein the operable fastening means, attaching the covering panel to the inner panel, are at least partly open. The blue arrows and the red arrows show the flow of fresh and hot air respectively.

A similar drawing is also found in the other leaflet (Attachment 2) which actually is a price list. It will be seen that no less than six models of the applicant's tent trailers incorporating the present invention now are available. These are the models indicated by "Membrane". These models have met with considerable interest from the public.

U.S. Patent No. 1,833,095 to Smith relates to a tent having certain walls that may be unfastened and thrown back in order to open up such walls for air circulation and an unimpaired view. However, in order to keep out insects, mosquito netting is used. This reference might well be the first disclosure of a tent having ventilation windows. Early tents did not have windows at all.

Even though Smith discloses a tent having larger parts of the walls and the roof provided with covering flaps that may be rolled up or thrown back, in fact those parts are simply windows provided with mosquito netting.

The present invention is not concerned with windows, though of course windows will usually be used in a tent construction in accordance with the present invention.

The present invention relates to exchangeable panels on a skeleton or double walled panels, having an inner panel of breathing material and an outer panel of weather resistant material, wherein such inner panel and such outer panel are removably connected to each other along their peripheral edges. Such connection along the peripheral edges is detachable in order to provide for ventilation of the interspace between such inner and outer wall (roof) panels.

In case of a skeleton the covering panels should be removably connected in order to provide a possibility for exchanging a damaged panel for a new one. Clearly Smith does not disclose nor suggest such removable and exchangeable panels.

In case of double walled panels the basic panel (inner panel) is made of suitable tent cloth of breathing material. In this connection it is observed that breathing material is a usual fabric, which like most fabrics is permeable for air. It is not a mosquito netting or a gauze material, which, from the view point of air permeability might just as well not be present at all, at least in the context of ventilation of tent constructions. Mosquito netting is too open and does not form any barrier to an air stream; it only keeps out insects. Also mosquito netting is rather vulnerable and will easily become damaged. In fact such mosquito netting is rather unsuitable for use as a tent wall which normally

should be able to be tensioned by guy ropes etc. Please refer to Smith, page 1, lines 56-76.

The tent construction in accordance with the present invention has inner tent walls made of a usual strong fabric, such as synthetic filter cloth, which is a closed fabric though permeable for air.

Clearly Smith does not teach or suggest such double walled panels in which the inner panel is a usual breathing fabric.

Attached is a picture (Attachment 4) showing on a somewhat enlarged scale part of an inner wall of a tent construction in accordance with the present invention. The picture shows a window provided with mosquito netting, and part of the tent cloth of the wall wherein the window is provided. As stated before the inner tent wall including the window will be covered by an outer tent wall of weather resistant material.

In fact in the applicant's tent construction a window in the inner wall will include a mosquito netting, covered on the inside by a clear plastic panel, which is fastened by zippers or VELCRO and which may be opened or closed from the inside. On the outer side of the mosquito netting a window covered is attached, also by means of zippers or VELCRO or the like. The window cover too is part of the inner wall of the tent and in its turn is covered by a part of the outer wall of the tent. Of course the outer wall of the tent should have a section which may be opened to

uncover the window. Attached you will find a picture of such a window (Attachment 5) in a tent construction in accordance with the present invention. The green cloth is a window cover which is connected by zippers in the inner tent wall. The white open flap is part of the outer wall of the tent constructions.

U.S. Patent No. 3,970,096 to Nicolai discloses a tunnel shaped tent having a non-porous outer tent and an inner tent of a porous material. The inner tent is suspended from the outer tent by mesh netting strips 62 which are attached to the outer tent and which keep the inner tent at a distance of 1-4 inches from the outer tent. Thus air in the inner tent may traverse the porous inner tent cloth and reach the interspace between the inner tent and the outer tent. At both ends of the tent the interspace is closed by semi-annular strips 64 of non porous material which however have ventilation openings 71. Thus this prior art tunnel tent may be ventilated through the interspace between inner tent and outer tent. However, this prior tent still is a conventional double walled tent which does not have a number of individual double walled panels as in the present invention. Nor does Nicolai disclose a tent construction having two layered panels of which the outer layer is connected to the inner layer by operable elongated connection means like zippers or VELCRO-strips.

U.S. patent No. 2,527,729 to Hoff discloses a conventional double walled tent having an inner wall spaced from an

outer wall. Ventilation is not discussed in Hoff nor are individual two layer panels as in the inventive tent construction.

U.S. Patent No. 5,915,399 to Yang relates to a car cover featuring a number of window sections which may be opened and which in conventional manner are provided with screen-like knitting fabrics 6 in order to keep insects out if the window sections are open and the car windows are also open. This makes it possible to sleep in the car even if it is covered by the car cover and still admit fresh air into the car interior while keeping insects out. Again, double walled panels (not being windows) have not been disclosed or suggested.


Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version With Markings To Show Changes Made".

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims in the present application, as they now stand, patentably distinguish over the references cited and applied by the Examiner and are, therefore, in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is in order, and such favorable action and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

However, if after reviewing the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner has any questions or comments, he is cordially invited to contact the undersigned attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please insert the following paragraph on page 1, before line 1.

--Field of the Invention--

Please insert the following paragraph on page 1, before line 10.

--Background of the Invention--

Please insert the following paragraph on page 3, before line 1.

--Summary of the Invention--

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 3, line 8 with the following rewritten paragraph.

-- In accordance with the invention, a method for manufacturing a tent construction comprising at least one panel manufactured from suitable cloth is characterized ~~in that~~ by the steps of manufacturing a basic tent construction having at least

one basic panel ~~is manufactured~~ from a desired material and ~~that~~
providing at least one of the basic panels ~~is provided~~ with one or
more covering panels which form part of the outer wall of the tent
and which are attached so as to be at least partially detachable.

--

Please insert the following paragraph on page 4, before
line 10.

--Brief Description of the Drawings--

Please insert the following paragraph on page 4, before
line 21.

--Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments--

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line
10, with the following rewritten paragraph.

-- Hereinafter, the invention will be further described with
reference to the accompanying drawing of some exemplary
embodiments. --

Please replace the paragraphs beginning at page 4, line
23 through page 8, line 7 with the following rewritten paragraphs.

-- A (folding trailer) tent can be made from 100% synthetic
cloth products having a very long lifetime, but which, however,

have the drawbacks of condensation and the lack of "breathing capacity". In accordance with a first aspect of the invention, a "skeleton" for at least a part of a tent (comparable with a timbered house) can be made from synthetic material. However, one or more large faces (roof and sidewall faces) of the tent are "filled in" with exchangeable cloth panels. Fig. 1 shows a front wall 3 of a (front) tent, constructed according to this principle. The wall 3 comprises strips 4 of firm cloth, which form the skeleton of the wall 3, as well as exchangeable panels 5. By means of zippers or ~~Velcro~~ **VELCRO** hook and loop fasteners or other techniques, these panels are attached to the "timbered frame/skeleton" along their circumferential edges. The number and dimensions of the panels can be optional. A small number of large panels, or a larger number of small panels. After many years of use, the exchangeable panels can be replaced as and when required. These panels can be produced in stock, in cotton cloth as well as in synthetic materials. At the moment of purchase and thereafter, the user of the tent can decide for himself which panels have to be supplied in synthetic cloth, and which panels in cotton cloth. The choice can partly be motivated by the intended use. If the tent, folding trailer or front tent is predominantly used for camping "on the hike", or, conversely, for a fixed stand, this may determine the composition of the panels. Also, in this manner, allowances can be made for personal preference. One of the objects of the

invention is to offer the possibility of minimizing the number of fixed panels of cloth of a relatively short lifetime. In addition, the tent no longer has to be thrown away when a particular panel of cotton cloth has become moldy, fouled or leaky. The tent (the "timbered frame", the "framework") with all its complicated angular joints, fastening points, reinforcements, etc. is produced once, for a long time, and the "fill-in" panels can be purchased or replaced as and when required. The effect that the tent is discarded due to fouling or because its color is no longer modern can hereby be avoided. This is an advantage to the environment. It is also possible to fit, per panel opening, two or more, if necessary overlapping panels in a simple manner by zippers, ~~Velcro~~ VELCRO hook and loop fasteners, etc. If so desired, the panels can partially be of rollable or erectable design, to promote the admission of light and air. Hence, the framework of the tent can comprise edges or strips supported by tent poles and the like, which edges or strips are manufactured from highly durable cloth and whereto or whereon panels are fitted that are relatively easy to attach and replace. According to a modification of the above-described tent construction, it is possible to use a number of exchangeable panels which are not, or not all of them, mounted on a separate skeleton, but which are directly detachably connected to adjoining panels via zippers, ~~Velcro~~ VELCRO hook and hoop fasteners or the like.

Fig. 1 schematically shows an example of such construction, used for the roof 6 of the front tent. In the example shown, the roof comprises a central section 7 and two side sections 8 and 9. One or more of the sections 7-9 may be detachably connected to the adjoining section(s) and/or adjoining walls, allowing these detachable sections, when for instance fouled, to be detached and cleaned. In practice, the cleaning of a roof panel of a tent construction, such as for instance a front tent of a (folding) caravan, is hardly possible if the roof panel is not detachable. Further, when fouled seriously, such panel can readily be replaced. If, for instance, the central section 7 is separately replaceable, zippers or ~~Velcro~~ VELCRO hook and loop fasteners may be provided along the edges 7a, 7b, 7c and 7d. Of course, the roof may also be detachable and replaceable as a whole, whether or not in combination with separately detachable roof sections.

Preferably, the roof of the tent is of double design, with an inner roof and an outer roof. In that case, the outer roof may be connected along one or more edges to the inner roof by operable fasteners such as, for instance, zippers 25, 26 or ~~Velcro~~ VELCRO hook and loop fasteners or the like. The inner roof may then again be detachably or undetachably connected to a tent skeleton as described hereinabove, or be directly connected, also

Not
shown

detachably or undetachably, to adjoining roof panels and/or wall panels.

A major advantage of such construction is that by entirely or partially undoing, on two directly or obliquely opposite or adjoining edges, zippers or ~~Velcro~~ VELCRO hook and loop fasteners or the like, whereby the outer roof is connected to the inner roof, a perfect ventilation possibility is created. In the example shown in Fig. 1, for instance, the zippers of the roof section 7 have been opened along the edges 7a and 7c, to create an open gap 11 between inner roof section 10 and outer roof section 7. Through the gap, air can flow that may provide cooling when the weather is hot and that may also provide ventilation in the tent when the inner roof is at least manufactured from air-permeable material. By opening only one zipper, for instance on the wind side, forced air is blown into the tent via the gap 11. Conversely, when the zipper on the lee side is opened, air is drawn from the tent. --

Please replace the paragraphs beginning on page 9, line 9 with the following rewritten paragraphs.

-- To prevent raining in, the outer roof panel may also be provided with edge flaps, ~~not shown~~ 28 capable of covering the gap 11 in depending condition. The edge flaps can for instance be secured on the adjoining wall by zippers, press studs, loops,

hooks, ~~Velcro~~ VELCRO hook and hoop fasteners, etc., or be folded over upwards.

Also, the inner roof panel may have waterproof edge strips 29 along the circumferential edges. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 1 with the following rewritten paragraph.

-- A third manner of embodying the finding is to construct the tent from a supporting fabric as desired (for instance cotton for ventilation, strong synthetic fabrics for lifetime and strength, etc.) or a combination of supporting fabrics (cotton, polyester, etc.) The covering panels, which may also be arranged in the manner of roof tiles or scales, can be connected to the basic fabric by, for instance, zippers, ~~Velcro~~ VELCRO hook and loop fasteners, stitching on one, two or three sides, or a combination thereof, or other connecting techniques. Such panels or "scales" are shown in Fig. 1 at 16, by way of example, and can preferably be pushed or pulled away from the tent from supporting fabric by means of "expanders" 17, or by stretching out by guy ropes, enabling air to permeate the supporting fabric underneath the panels. Along their lower edges, the scales can optionally be provided or not provided with fasteners for attachment to the supporting fabric or to the underlying scale. Optionally, openings or windows may be locally provided in the supporting fabric, behind the covering

panels. If so desired, the covering panels can locally be transparent or have (closable) windows. Thus, it is possible to have a supporting tent of breathing material, such as for instance cotton, which, protected by the overlying panels, never becomes wet in the rain and which is not exposed to sunrays. The many advantages already pointed out in the above passages are largely also applicable to this finding. --

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 2, 20, 22, 34 and 38-40 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend claims 1, 3-19, 21, 23-33 and 35-37 as follows:

1. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a tent construction ~~(1) comprising at least one panel manufactured from suitable cloth, characterized by~~ said method comprising the steps of

manufacturing a basic tent construction having at least one basic panel from a desired material ~~and,~~

providing at least one of said basic panels with one or more covering panels ~~(5)~~ of waterproof material which form part of the an outer wall ~~(3)~~ of the tent construction ~~(1)~~, and

removably mounting one of the at least one covering panel on the outer wall of the tent construction so that the one of the

at least one covering panel is completely removable from the tent construction.

3. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, further including the steps of forming the basic panel by a number of ~~relatively narrow~~ edge strips (4) of durable cloth, and attaching to said edge strips (4) one or more at least partially detachable covering panels (5), which together with the ~~relatively narrow~~ edge strips (4) form at least a ~~complete panel or~~ panel part.

4. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the basic tent construction is formed from breathing material on which at least one covering panel (5) of weather-resistant material is fitted.

5. (Amended) A method according to claim 3, wherein ~~the~~ an opening ~~left clear~~ formed by the ~~relatively narrow~~ edge strips (4) is closed off by ~~a relatively~~ an open, breathing material for forming a closed basic panel, and wherein on the thus obtained basic panel at least one covering panel of weather-resistant material is fitted.

6. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the basic panels is provided with covering panels (5) arranged ~~in the manner of~~ as roof tiles or scales (16).

7. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein one of or more covering panels (5) are arranged for ~~setting out or~~ folding down ~~or the like~~.

8. (Amended) A method according to claim 3, wherein ~~from~~ the ~~relatively narrow~~ edge strips (4), together with tent poles (12, 13) ~~and the like~~, form a frame for the tent construction (1) ~~is formed~~.

9. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein for attaching at least one covering panel (5) along at least one of the edges of the covering panel, detachable fastening means are used.

10. (Amended) A method according to claim 9, wherein ~~as~~ the detachable fastening means include one of zippers, ~~Velcro~~ and hook and loop fasteners ~~or the like are used~~.

11. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the covering panels (5) is provided with an

expansion member ~~(17)~~ to enable putting the covering panel ~~(5)~~ into an outwardly open position.

12. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the covering panels ~~(5)~~ is provided with one or more guy ropes for stretching out the covering panel.

13. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a tent construction having at least one roof panel and at least one wall panel ~~(4)~~, ~~characterized by~~ comprising the steps of

making at least the roof panel of double-walled design having an outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ and an inner panel ~~(10)~~, and

providing operable closing means to enable opening or closing ~~the~~ an interspace ~~(11)~~ located between the inner panel ~~(10)~~ and the outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~, and

removably mounting the outer panel so that the outer panel is at least partially removable from the tent construction.

14. (Amended) A method according to claim 13, wherein the outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ is provided with means ~~(14, 15)~~ for tautening the outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ to increase the interspace ~~(11)~~ between the outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ and the inner panel ~~(10)~~.

15. (Amended) A method according to claim 14, wherein at the a location of at least one of the tent poles ~~(12, 13)~~ pole, the outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ is provided with at least one additional opening ~~(14, 15)~~ for receiving a tent pole ~~(12, 13)~~ to enable bringing the outer panel ~~*(7, 8, 9)~~ into a taut ~~and a less taut~~ condition.

16. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 13, wherein the inner panel ~~is made with~~ provides a hollow cut appearance.

17. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 13, wherein the outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ is designed with detachable fastening means provided along at least two edges ~~(7a-7d)~~, for attaching the outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ to the inner panel ~~(10)~~.

18. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 13, wherein the outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ is provided with edge flaps for covering the interspace between the outer panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ and the inner panel ~~(10)~~.

19. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 13, wherein the inner panel ~~(10)~~ is provided with one or more waterproof edge strips.

21. (Amended) A tent construction ~~(1)~~ comprising at least one basic panel manufactured from ~~suitable~~ cloth forming an inner wall of the tent construction, ~~characterized by a basic tent construction (1) comprising at least one basic panel (4),~~ at least one of the basic panels being covered with one or more covering panels ~~(5)~~ of waterproof material, forming part of ~~the~~ an outer wall of the tent construction ~~(1)~~, the covering panel being removably mounted for at least partial removal from the tent construction.

23. (Twice Amended) A tent construction according to claim 21, ~~characterized in that the~~ wherein at least one basic panel ~~(5)~~ comprises a number of ~~relatively narrow~~ edge ~~(4)~~ strips of durable material, one or more ~~at least partially~~ detachable covering panels ~~(5)~~ being attached to the edge strips ~~(4)~~.

24. (Amended) A tent construction according to claim 23, ~~characterized in that the~~ wherein an opening of the at least one basic panel, ~~which opening is left clear by the relatively narrow edge strips (4),~~ is closed off by ~~an air and/or light-permeable~~ a material permeable to at least one of air and light for forming a closed basic panel.

25. (Twice Amended) A tent construction according to claim 23, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the relatively narrow edge strips ~~(4)~~ of a number of basic panels, together with associated tent poles ~~(12, 13) or the like~~, form at least a part of a frame for the tent construction ~~(1)~~.

26. (Twice Amended) A tent construction according to claim 21, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the basic tent construction ~~(11)~~ is at least partially built up from breathing cloth, on which a suitable number of panels from weather-resistant material are provided, said number of panels comprising one or more ~~at least partially~~ detachable panels ~~(5)~~.

27. (Twice Amended) A tent construction according to claim 21, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the ~~at least partially~~ detachable panels ~~(5)~~ comprise at least a roof panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~.

28. (Amended) A tent construction according to claim 27, ~~characterized in that by operable fastening means, the roof panel (7, 8, 9) is connected along at least two edges (7a-7d to an inner roof panel (10), while by the fastening means,~~ wherein a gap-shaped space ~~(11)~~ can be opened or closed between the ~~an~~ outer roof panel ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ and the ~~an~~ inner roof panel ~~(10)~~.

29. (Amended) A tent construction according to claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the inner roof panel (10) is provided with waterproof edge strips ~~adjacent the fastening means.~~

30. (Twice Amended) A tent construction according to claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the outer roof panel (7, 8, 9) is provided with an edge flap ~~adjacent the fastening means,~~ for covering the an entrance to the gap-shaped space (11).

31. (Twice Amended) A tent construction according to claim 27, ~~characterized by~~ further comprising tensioning means (14, 15) for tensioning the ~~at least one~~ roof panel (7, 8, 9) ~~taut or less taut.~~

32. (Amended) A tent construction according to claim 31, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the tensioning means comprise a number of receiving openings (14, 15) for a tent pole (12, 13), provided side by side in the roof panel (7, 8, 9).

33. (Amended) A tent construction according to claim 27, ~~characterized by~~ wherein an inner roof panel (10) ~~which~~ is located under a partially detachable outer roof panel (7, 8, 9) and ~~(which)~~ ~~is cut (hollow)~~ provides a hollow appearance.

35. (Twice Amended) A tent construction according to claim 21, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein at least a number of covering panels (16) ~~can be stretched out by means of~~ have expanders and/or tensioners (17) for stretching out.

36. (Twice Amended) A tent construction according to claim 21, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein at least one of the covering panels (5) is of double-layered design such that between the layers of ~~such a~~ the covering panel (5), a layer of insulating material ~~can be~~ is provided.

37. (Twice Amended) A tent construction according to claim 21, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein under at least a number of covering panels (5), a layer of insulating material has been provided.